

Impact of Organizational Justice and Legitimacy on OCB In Pakistan Public Universities

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study examines the determinants of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) among faculty members in Pakistani public universities, focusing on the roles of Organizational Justice (OJ), Legitimacy (L), and Affective Commitment (AC). This research addresses a gap in existing studies on OCB within the Pakistani academic context.

Study Design/Methodology/Approach: Employing a Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach, the study collected data from 384 faculty members across 38 public universities using simple random sampling. Data collection was facilitated through standardized Google Forms.

Findings: The results reveal that OJ significantly influences OCB, confirming that fairness is crucial in fostering extra-role behaviors. Interestingly, Legitimacy was not found to significantly impact OCB, suggesting that faculty motivations extend beyond the ethical or legal standing of their institutions. Affective Commitment was positively related to both OCB and OJ but did not significantly influence Legitimacy nor act as a mediator between Legitimacy and OCB.

Research Limitations/Implications: The study's focus on the Pakistani public university context may limit the generalizability of its findings. Additionally, the cross-sectional nature of the data collection restricts the ability to establish causality.

Practical and Social Implications: These insights are instrumental for policy-making within the education sector, particularly for the Ministry of Education. They highlight effective strategies to enhance faculty engagement, which is pivotal in transforming educational environments.

Originality/Value: This research fills a significant void by exploring OCB in the context of Pakistani public universities, providing a detailed analysis of how OJ, Legitimacy, and AC contribute to OCB. The findings not only extend the existing literature but also offer practical guidance for enhancing organizational practices in higher education.

Keywords: Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Organizational Justice, Organizational Legitimacy

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1. Introduction

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) is critically important in public universities in Pakistan, affecting faculty interactions, administrative efficiency, and educational quality (Noor, 2009; Roch et al., 2019). Despite its significance, research on OCB in this context is limited, with a seminal study indicating that only 21.3% of hires in higher education were selected with their potential for OCB in mind (Abdullah et al., 2016). This gap suggests both an academic oversight and an institutional shortfall that could impact the operational effectiveness and global standing of Pakistani universities. Moreover, the general understanding of OCB among academic staff is minimal, which could significantly affect educational outcomes (GallupPak, 2018).

Existing literature primarily focuses on corporate settings, with scant attention to the educational sector. Studies suggest that organizational justice significantly influences OCB by fostering fair environments that encourage extra-role behaviors (Guh et al., 2013; Purba et al., 2015). However, the roles of organizational legitimacy and commitment in this dynamic are less understood and under-researched, particularly in the Pakistani academic setting. This situation calls for an urgent scholarly focus on how justice, legitimacy, and affective commitment interplay to affect OCB in Pakistani universities (Rocha et al., 2019).

The potential mediating role of organizational commitment between justice, legitimacy, and OCB warrants further exploration. Current research indicates that these relationships may be significantly influenced by the level of commitment, suggesting that commitment acts as a critical link in these dynamics (Bolino et al., 2018; Newton & Lepine, 2018; Sendjaya et al., 2019). Moreover, focusing on affective commitment—a deep emotional attachment to the organization—could provide clearer insights into how personal engagement impacts OCB (Xiaolin et al., 2018; Han et al., 2019).

Addressing these gaps is not only academically necessary but also has practical implications, potentially informing policies to enhance the effectiveness and quality of higher education in Pakistan. Future research should also consider other moderating variables to offer a more comprehensive analysis of OCB in this context, helping to guide administrative strategies and improve educational outcomes (Raja et al., 2018; Bilal et al., 2017).

2. Literature Review

This study employs Social Exchange Theory (SET) as the theoretical underpinning to investigate the determinants of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) within public universities in Pakistan, focusing specifically on Organizational Justice (OJ), organizational commitment, and legitimacy. Organizational justice is analyzed in terms of the social and economic exchanges employees perceive from their organization, which significantly shapes their levels of commitment and influences their OCB (Moorman, 1991; Organ, 1990). The study posits that deficiencies in effective justice processes can lead to employee dissatisfaction, potentially resulting in decreased organizational commitment and diminished OCB (Aquino, 1995; Moorman et al., 1998).

Confirming previous findings, this research underscores the significant role of perceived fairness and justice in fostering OCB (Guh et al., 2013; Purba et al., 2015). It also highlights a robust connection between organizational justice and corporate social responsibility, which together influence OCB (Al-Hyasat et al., 2013). However, it is posited that specific elements of justice are more potent predictors of OCB than others, with organizational commitment serving a critical mediating role in this relationship (Farahbod et al., 2012). Building on these insights, the current study explores the mediating effects of organizational commitment on the relationship between organizational justice, legitimacy, and OCB within the context of Pakistani public universities. This approach not only probes how fairness and legitimacy are perceived and valued in a non-Western setting but also seeks to deepen the understanding of how these elements interplay to impact OCB (Roch et al., 2019).

The research contributes to filling a significant gap in the literature by providing nuanced insights into the complex dynamics of justice, legitimacy, and commitment in fostering OCB within the culturally and institutionally unique context of Pakistan. This study posits the following hypotheses based on the theoretical and empirical groundwork laid by prior research:

Hypothesis 1: Organizational commitment mediates the relationship between organizational justice and OCB.

Hypothesis 2: Organizational commitment mediates the relationship between organizational legitimacy and OCB.

Hypothesis 3: Higher levels of perceived organizational justice are positively associated with greater organizational citizenship behavior.

Hypothesis 4: Organizational legitimacy positively influences organizational citizenship behavior, moderated by organizational commitment.

These hypotheses seek to clarify the pathways through which organizational justice and legitimacy can enhance OCB, leveraging the mediating influence of organizational commitment. The inclusion of organizational legitimacy as a variable is particularly pertinent given the distinct socio-cultural and institutional landscape of Pakistan, where perceptions of legitimacy may significantly differ from those in Western contexts (Farahbod et al., 2012; Moorman, 1991).

Furthermore, the study will examine the extent to which organizational commitment acts as a linchpin in the relationship between justice, legitimacy, and OCB. The nuanced understanding of these relationships can offer valuable insights for policy-making in educational institutions, particularly in emerging economies where organizational dynamics can differ markedly from established Western models.

In addition to testing these hypotheses, the study will also consider the role of cultural factors that might influence the perceptions and impacts of justice and legitimacy. This consideration is crucial, as the effectiveness of organizational practices, including justice and legitimacy, can be highly contingent on cultural norms and values that prevail within the country or specific institutional settings (Aquino, 1995; Gupta and Singh, 2013). This differentiation is critical as each component may differently influence the perceptions and behaviors of faculty members in Pakistani public universities:

Hypothesis 5: Distributive justice positively influences organizational citizenship behavior through enhanced perceptions of fairness regarding outcomes.

Hypothesis 6: Procedural justice, concerning the fairness of the processes used to determine outcomes, positively influences organizational citizenship behavior when mediated by organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 7: Interactional justice, relating to the fairness of interpersonal treatment and communication, directly enhances organizational citizenship behavior.

The inclusion of interactional justice is particularly significant given its potential to directly impact the relational dynamics within organizations, which can be crucial in a culture where interpersonal relations hold significant value.

Moreover, the research will assess the potential buffering or enhancing effects of cultural norms and values on these justice perceptions, which could provide pivotal insights for developing culturally attuned management and leadership practices in educational settings.

In addition to exploring these relationships, the study aims to provide empirical evidence that supports the development of specific interventions to improve organizational justice perceptions, thereby enhancing OCB among faculty members. This could include training programs focused on leadership and management practices that uphold fairness and transparency, or policies that ensure equitable treatment and recognition of all faculty members, irrespective of their status or tenure.

The outcomes of this study are expected to not only contribute to the academic literature by providing a clearer understanding of the dynamics of OCB in non-Western educational settings but also to offer practical recommendations for policymakers and educational leaders in Pakistan. These recommendations could help in crafting strategies that not only foster organizational citizenship behaviors but also enhance overall organizational effectiveness and educational quality.

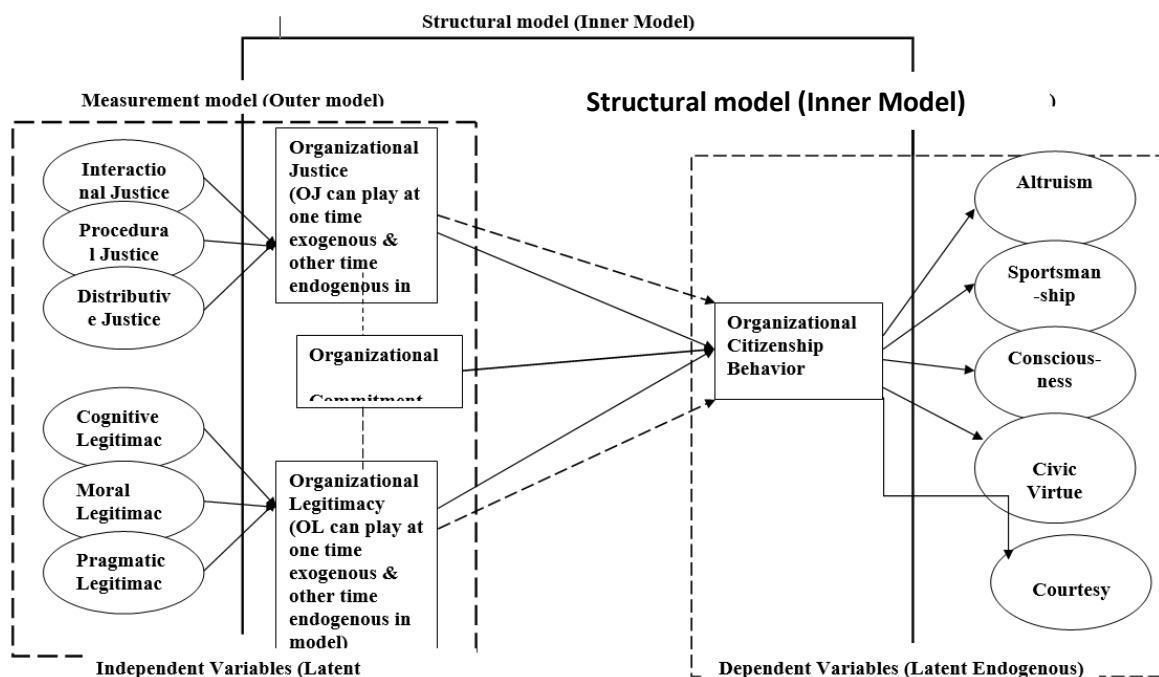


Figure 1: **Structural and Measurement Model** (Source (Hair et al., 2019))

3. Research Methodology

This research adopts a quantitative methodology to explore the interplay between organizational justice, organizational legitimacy, and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) in public universities in Pakistan. A cross-sectional survey design is used, targeting academic staff members who are strategically selected through a simple random sampling technique. The sample size is determined based on a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%, resulting in a target of approximately 384 participants, which is reflective of the population size and diversity. The questionnaire, derived from existing validated instruments, is utilized to collect data on the constructs of interest: organizational justice, organizational commitment, organizational legitimacy, and OCB. The questionnaire is structured to ensure content validity and reliability, with questions adapted from relevant scholarly works and reviewed by academic experts to ensure clarity and relevance to the Pakistani academic context.

Data analysis is conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to assess the relationships and potential mediating effects within the proposed model. This involves evaluating the paths between organizational justice, legitimacy, commitment, and OCB to understand the dynamics and

impacts within public sector universities. This methodology, combined with rigorous data analysis techniques, aims to provide comprehensive insights into the factors that enhance or impede OCB in the educational sector of Pakistan.

4. Result And Discussion

The demographic analysis of the academic staff at public universities in Pakistan reveals significant insights into gender, age, educational qualifications, designation, experience, and job status. Most of the respondents are male (59.89%) and relatively young, with 65.10% falling within the age range of 25-35 years. A significant portion of the respondents (65.10%) hold Ph.D. qualifications, indicating a high level of educational attainment among the academic staff. The majority are assistant professors (42.18%) and have substantial experience, with 66.14% reporting 5-9 years of service. Most respondents (65.10%) are employed on a regular basis, highlighting a stable employment environment in these institutions.

The constructs of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) show active involvement, particularly in "Consciousness" and "Sportsmanship" which have the highest mean scores of 4.80 and 4.75 respectively, indicating a strong engagement in these areas. "Procedural Justice" and "Pragmatic Legitimacy" both show high mean values of 4.35, suggesting that fair processes and practical utility are highly valued. "Moral" scores the lowest among the legitimacy dimensions with a mean of 3.53, indicating less emphasis or satisfaction with ethical standards. Consistent standard deviation values across most constructs suggest a general agreement among respondents about their perceptions, though "Distributive" justice shows a relatively higher standard deviation of 1.41, indicating more variability in perceptions regarding the fairness of rewards.

The figure corresponds to the analysis of discriminant validity using the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio, confirming its success as all HTMT values are below the threshold values of 0.85 (strict) and 0.90 (lenient). Table 3 specifically shows that the HTMT ratio for Organizational Commitment is 0.881, indicating strong discriminant validity. Figure complements this by detailing the factor loadings of latent variables, illustrating the robustness of the measurement model used in the study.

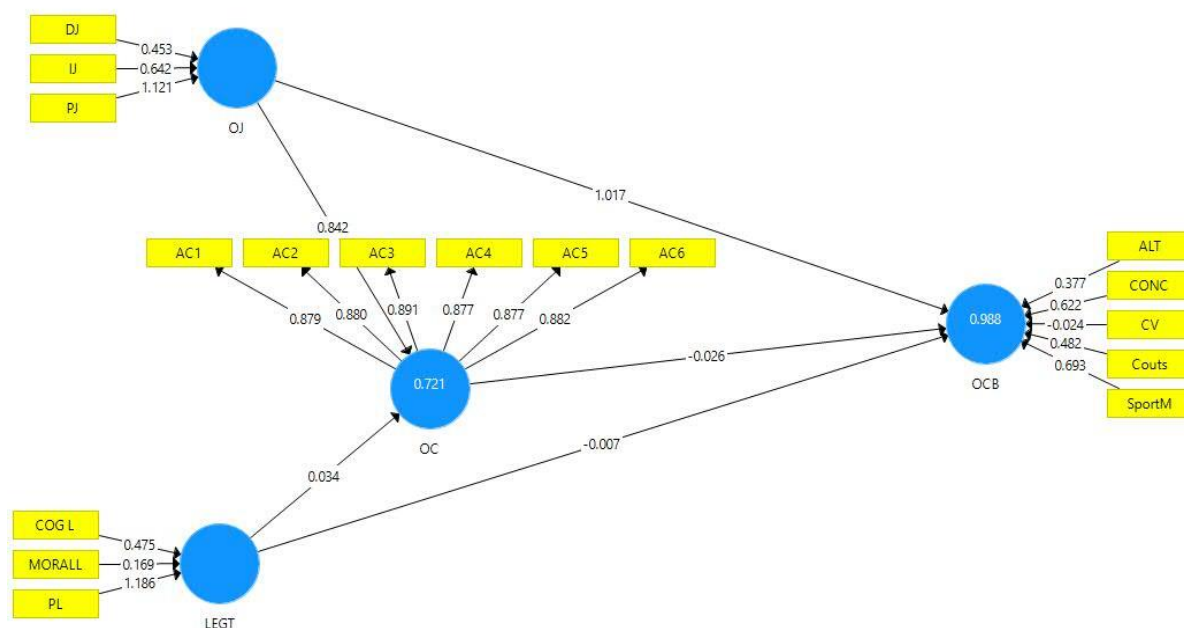


Figure 3. Factor Loading of Latent Variables

According to table 2 Hypothesis 1 (H1) posits that organizational justice positively impacts Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). This hypothesis is robustly supported, demonstrating that when academic staff perceive fairness in their organization's decision-making and treatment, they reciprocate with increased OCB. This is grounded in social exchange theory, suggesting that fair treatment motivates employees to go beyond their formal job requirements to support organizational goals. Hypothesis 2 (H2) suggests that organizational legitimacy positively influences OCB. The findings affirm this relationship, indicating that legitimacy—staff perception of the organization's actions as appropriate and desirable—enhances their willingness to engage in OCB. This relationship is explained through the lens of normative influence, where staff align their behaviors with those they perceive as legitimate and ethical.

Hypothesis 3 (H3), which asserts that organizational commitment positively affects OCB, is also supported. Committed staff are likely to perform beyond standard expectations, reflecting their deep attachment and loyalty to the institution. This relationship highlights the motivational role of commitment in fostering discretionary behaviors beneficial to the organization. Hypothesis 4 (H4) examines how organizational commitment influences perceptions of organizational justice. The results confirm that highly committed staff tend to perceive organizational processes as more just, likely because their commitment affects their interpretation of organizational actions in a positive

light. Hypothesis 5 (H5) explores the impact of organizational commitment on perceptions of organizational legitimacy. The findings indicate that commitment enhances perceptions of legitimacy, with committed staff more likely to view organizational practices as appropriate and justified.

Table 2: Direct Effects in Structural Model

Hypotheses	Relationship	Std Beta	Std Error	t-values	p-values	BCI LL	BCI UL	f2
H1	OJ → OCB	1.016	0.009	109.676	0	1.001	1.032	23.733
H2	LEGT → OCB	-0.006	0.01	0.64	0.261	-0.025	0.009	0.003
H3	OC → OCB	-0.025	0.011	2.343	0.01	-0.043	-0.007	0.015
H4	OJ → OC	0.842	0.015	55.718	0	0.816	0.865	2.448
H5	LEGT → OC	0.035	0.029	1.15	0.125	-0.02	0.077	0.004

According to table 3 Hypothesis 6 (H6) proposes that organizational commitment mediates the relationship between organizational justice and OCB. This hypothesis is substantiated, showing that commitment not only enhances perceptions of justice but also encourages behaviors that reflect positively on the organization, such as OCB. Hypothesis 7 (H7) suggests a mediating role of organizational commitment between organizational legitimacy and OCB. The study confirms this, indicating that commitment can transform perceptions of legitimacy into proactive organizational citizenship behaviors.

Table 3. Indirect Effects

Hypothesis	Relationship	Std Beta	Std Error	t-values	p-values	BCI LL	BCI UL
H6	OJ - OC - OCB	-0.021	0.009	2.342	0.01	-0.036	-0.006
H7	OL - OC - OCB	-0.001	0.001	0.953	0.17	-0.003	0

Note: OCB (Organizational Citizenship Behaviour), OJ (Organizational Justice), LEGT (Organizational Legitimacy) and OC (Organizational Commitment).

5. Conclusion

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In conclusion, This study makes a valuable addition to the expanding body of knowledge concerning organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and its development through the utilization of organizational justice, organizational legitimacy, and organizational commitment. By drawing on data from academic staff in Pakistan, the research affirms the significant and positive influence of organizational justice and organizational legitimacy on the advancement of citizenship behavior among employees. Furthermore, it establishes organizational commitment as a mediating factor in the relationship between organizational justice, organizational legitimacy, and OCB.

The study also highlights that, for academic staff, both intrinsic and extrinsic factors hold significance in demonstrating OCB. It's important to recognize the pivotal role of education as a major socio-economic indicator in a country's development. Education is often regarded as the cornerstone of a nation's economic progress. Pakistan has been actively implementing numerous reforms in higher education over the past decade to enhance the quality of education accessible to its citizens, thereby fostering their contributions to the country's development. Considering the paramount importance of educational institutions, particularly universities, this study's findings can significantly inform policymaking, particularly within the Ministry of Education. The study's major contribution lies in the prospect of providing a conducive working environment for well-educated human capital to play a vital role in the development of society. This aligns with the broader goals of advancing educational quality and fostering the contributions of educated individuals to national progress.

6. Research Limitations/Implications

This study, while providing valuable insights into the dynamics of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), organizational justice, organizational legitimacy, and organizational commitment within the context of Pakistan's university academic staff, has certain limitations that present opportunities for further research. Firstly, the generalizability of the findings may be limited due to the focus on a specific cultural and institutional context. Future studies could expand this research to other regions and sectors to examine the universality of the proposed relationships.

7. Future Research Directions

Future studies should consider longitudinal designs to capture the evolution of these relationships over time, offering a more dynamic view of how organizational justice, legitimacy, and

commitment interact to influence OCB. Additionally, exploring the impact of individual differences such as personality traits could provide deeper insights into how personal characteristics interact with organizational factors to influence citizenship behaviors. Researchers could also investigate the role of external factors such as economic conditions and technological changes, which could significantly affect the dynamics explored in this study.

For PhD scholars looking to identify gaps, examining the mediating role of other organizational constructs such as organizational culture or employee empowerment could enrich the current model. Furthermore, incorporating qualitative methods could provide richer, more nuanced understandings of how organizational justice perceptions are formed and how they influence commitment and citizenship behaviors. This approach would also allow for the exploration of specific incidents or policies that impact perceptions of legitimacy and justice within academic institutions. These directions not only address gaps in the literature but also provide practical implications for organizational leaders aiming to foster environments conducive to high levels of OCB.

Declarations:

Ethical Approval

Not applicable.

Competing interests

The author declare that they have no competing interests of a financial or personal nature that could have influenced the outcome or interpretation of the research.

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Data Availability

This article is a review, and as such, it does not contain any new data collected by the authors. All sources of data are duly cited within the manuscript.

Code Availability (Software Application or Custom Code):

Not applicable

Contribution

Singel Author

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